Aristasia Treasure Trove

The Cursing Ape Sunday, Sep 6 2009

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia11:44 am

Four-letter monosyllables replace high invective. "We ARE apes, after all".

We were talking last night in the ol' embie about the very old saying that Aristasia in Telluria is one long conversation and how the founding of a Lay College has been a natural continuation of that – for a Lay College is a place of discourse and learning, not directed to an end, like the Graduating Colleges, but continuing always as a way of life.

And we spoke of how our conversation was a feminine form of education – for masculine conversation is often about "winning" or "who is right", while feminine conversation is a search for truth within an agreed world of thamë – a Unanimous Society, to borrow a phrase from Ananda Coomaraswamy.

And one of the things I have always loved about this kind of academic discussion (academic in the sense of the groves of trees [*academe*] where the pupils of Sappho or Sai Hermya sat in discourse) is that the teacher often learns as much as the pupil (and of course in informal discussion "teacher" and "pupil" may change places instantly), for by examining our subjects of discussion carefully and responding to the questions of our intelligent and thoughtful academiciennes, we refine our thoughts and oft-times learn things we did not know we knew.

Such a moment occurred last night when we were talking about thamë, morality and cursing. The point was made that the Christian concentration on morality and sin can actually be corrosive. Many serious Christians will, for, example, use filthy language in the belief that they are not committing any sin in doing so. Some of these would agree that to *offend* anyone with their cussing would be sinful, and will reserve it for like-minded "liberated" company. But they do not believe – and even those who are offended do not believe – that dirty words are sinful in themselves.

And, by the narrow Christian definition of sin, they are not. That is why this morality-morality is so dangerously inadequate.

Christians of an earlier generation avoided cuss-words because they did not take the barrack-room-lawyer attitude that "it isn't actually sin so I can do it". They understood that impropriety and sin are close cousins – an attitude that is dismissed as "illogical" by the post-Eclipse mind.

And, indeed, it *is* illogical – because earlier generations of Christians, no less than their more recent counterparts, had lost the doctrine of thamë.

A good analogy would be if the current world had forgotten the germ theory of disease. Surgeons would still go on washing their hands just because "it is better to be clean". Until a generation of post-modern critics started saying "why are you washing your hands – there is no logical reason for it". And the surgeons would have to agree, and many would stop washing their hands.

Many also would cling sentimentally to the old, illogical discipline of rigorously washing their hands like the outmoded ritualists they are, but slowly a generation of surgeons would arise among whom hand-washing was seen as the antiquated superstition it clearly is (at least for those who no longer know the germ-theory of disease).

In our case, the germ-theory of disease is the law of thamë. The knowledge that harmony is fundamentally important and that to invoke ordure or coarse sexuality is *literally* dirty, and as disease-bearing to the soul as physical filth is to the body.

We also spoke of the decline of invective. If I were really angry and wished to state my anger, I should indulge myself in high rhetoric, excoriating the object of my anger. I flatter myself that I have a reasonable vocabulary and a fair-to-middling knack with words. I think I could come up with some pretty scathing diatribes should the need arise.

But for most educated people in the Pit, in moments of extreme anger, their highest invective consists of a few schoolyard monosyllables, endlessly repeated and strung together with semi-articulate prose.

Our reaction to it is not one of shock, but of contempt. That an educated person should be reduced by temper to the mental level of a drug-addled vagrant is simply laughable. "Rhetoric" of this kind is not just offensive, but *weak*. Having established that they can pronounce the same dirty words that make pre-teens giggle, they have exhausted their repertoire.

Now this is a new thing. In the past anger moved educated people to rhetoric, not to semi-literate monosyllables. What has changed? A friend last night suggested that it was laziness, and on thinking about this suggestion carefully, and *feeling* it, as it were, I feel sure this is not the main reason.

The main reason, I feel quite sure, is Darwinism. At first this may seem an odd suggestion, but let us consider it for a moment. Miss Trent, in *The Feminine Universe* documents the huge change that came about in Tellurian culture in the late 19th century, leading Prof. C.S.Lewis to declare (in his inaugural lecture as professor of Mediaeval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge) that the author of *Beowulf* has more in common with Jane Austen than we have. A huge watershed took place at the end of the 19th century. And Miss Trent shows that the reason for it was the change in the underlying *mythos* of the western world from real myths, that convey metaphysical truth, to the pseudo-mythos of evolutionism.

Now I am not going to go into all the ramifications of that myth. Its effect on bad language is one tiny part of a vast change. But it is there and it is obvious.

In the past an angry person would seek to express her anger in terms that were most in keeping with what she conceived herself to be – an intelligent being, ultimately a reflection of the Divine. High rhetoric was her natural mode for expressing passion.

What does the modern person think of high rhetoric? That it is "artificial".

Why – in the end – will she not use it in anger? Because she feels her hearers will dismiss her anger as "phony".

The "real" and "natural" way to express anger is in inarticulate shouts, in monosyllabic grunts that refer to irrelevant animal functions.

Why? Because ultimately, we *are* animals. Any attempt to bring the refinements of civilization to our anger just prove that is not "real anger" because *in extremis* we should be reduced to our animal base.

That is why pre-Darwin anger was expressed in high rhetoric and post-Darwin anger in monkey monosyllables.

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See also: The Animal Thesis

11 Responses »

Words and Angels Thursday, May 15 2008

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia3:01 pm

Miss Barbara asked:
Your esteemed correspondent uses the word "Sucrescent" to describe the colour of the milky pink Gamebaby Advance. I have looked this word up in two dictionaries and cannot find it. Is it an Aristasian word? And what does it mean?

This was the reply:
Sucrescent *is* an Aristasian word. It is a little hard to translate exactly as it implies a world of thought which is somewhat unusual to the modern Tellurian mind. All that in just describing a colour!

Essentially Sucrescent means "Pertaining to the Angel (or Genia) Sucri (Sushuri)". Sucri corresponds to the Tellurian planet and goddess Venus (Aphrodite). Both the colour pink and milk are things that correspond to Sucri, so milky pink is particularly Sucrescent.

It may seem a little strange to bring angels or deities into everyday conversation about things like games machines, but it should be understood that everything in the world is shaped by divine essences and that the seven Great Geniae are among the most salient of these essences. To see things in terms of them is natural to an Aristasian and is not considered to be profaning the sacred, but rather making sacred the things of daily life. More correctly, seeing the sacred that is already in them.

Some will ask – Is a lightgame machine inherently sacred? We should reply – did the inventor of the lightgame machine invent the colour pink? Can anyone invent a colour? No. The colours were there before we entered world. We can only use the colours that Dea has created and they will mean what they meant when She created them unless we pervert their meanings. Of colours this is clearly true, but it is also true of everything else. We cannot create forms. Forms are inherent in the Universe and before that in the Intelligence that shapes the Universe. We can only work with the forms that are – combine and manipulate them, but not create them.

Thus a story or a game or an artefact, if it is true to Form and does not pervert it, will always reflect Divine reality. The Zelda stories, which tell of high princesses and noble adventurers and the eternal conflict of good and evil are a case in point.

The word Vikhelic is another word of the same kind. It means "Pertaining to the Angel Vikhe". Vikhe is equivalent to the Tellurian planet and god Mars (though, of course, she is feminine), and the term "Vikhelic arts" is precisely equivalent to the Tellurian term "martial arts" – though the divine origins of the word "martial" are largely forgotten in modern Telluria.

Leave a Response »

Formality and Fun Monday, Apr 21 2008

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia7:11 pm

This exchange came immediately after the conversation recorded in Timeless Motherhood:

Miss Suzanna wrote:
Thank you very much for your replies to my questions. It is wonderful to ask a question and get such replies. They present an enticing vision of a grave and beautiful way of life. By grave, I don't mean lacking in fun, in fact I don't quite know what I mean, but the word seems to fit!

It is heartbreaking to think how, from childhood, there is so much misery and suffering in the Pit, due to spiritual starvation… You said [earlier] that we have control over our own hestia – our homes and hearts, and can do something about them. If we try to lead our lives in a way which is pleasing to Dea, will that have an effect on the suffering of others, even if it is not directly helping them? Or is there some other way we can do this, in the way that nuns in a convent believe that their prayers will have a potent effect on the atmosphere somehow.

Miss Sushuri Novaryana replied:
I believe that by living lives that are pleasing to Dea and are racinated, we do have an effect on that part of the *anima mundi* to which we are connected.

I also believe that ideas are much underrated. By making available ideas and ways of looking at things that are nourishing (though largely forgotten by the current world) I think we provide new possibilities for people. So much of life, after all, is in the mind, and all cultural developments, good and bad, begin there.

I understand your word "grave". It probably applies to Estrenne thinking rather than Westrenne in Aristasia. But in the end the Estrenne way of thought underlies all our thinking.

The quality you are describing, I think could also be called "measured" (remember that the term "a measure" used to be used for a dance-step as well as mensuration) or "in tune with the universal harmony". It is the quality of thamë. Such terms as "stately", "formal" and "ritualised" are also associated with it. To the modern Western mind these things seem very serious and lacking the joy of spontaneity; but we should remember that to our ancestors, these things were supremely joyful, which is why the quality of Jupiter (Thamë) is called *jovial*. Nowadays joy tends to be trivialised, so "jovial" has lost all its ritual and formal associations; but for those who first used the world, formality and fun went hand-in-hand to the point where they could be expressed by the same word.

Leave a Response »

How Do You Like My New Mindset? Sunday, Mar 16 2008

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia11:33 am

Lady Aquila wrote:
I was thinking about the fact that we need a new Decanter. There are so many dreadful words not included in the old one. "Recycling" isn't there. Ridiculous word. It sounds like coming back from somewhere on a bicycle. What is wrong with good old Kadorian "salvage"? And all those words used as the wrong part of speech: "party", "critique" and "access" as verbs, for example, or "savvy" as an adjective.

And what about "mindset"? What on earth is a "mindset"? It sounds like something bongos might call their television sets. You know the thing that sets their minds. "Do not adjust your set – it will adjust you".

Or is it the result of the mind-setting?

"How do you like my new mindset, darling?"

"It's just the same as everyone else's."

"Don't say that! Don't ever say that! It is completely different. I am a rebel. I am an individualist."

Well, of course she is. They all are. She probably has a "warped sense of humour" too. Not nasty messy warping like that caused by over-exposure to the sun or water on the brain, but nice neat warping, moulded to the correct curvature (politically and otherwise) and each with the same little dreadfully-clever swear word neatly turned up at the end. Rather like factory-torn jeans.

Of course she is a rebel, an individualist and a non-conformist. She ought to be. Milliards of taxpayers' pounds and quintillions of corporate dollars have gone into making her one. She is a piece of precision engineering wrought upon the most delicate and difficult raw material available – the human mind. She has been successfully detached from the traditional ground from which she sprung, like ore extracted from a mine, and turned into something new.

She is the most expensive and the most successful mass-product on earth.

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The Decanter is a guide to words and expressions only used in the Pit.

One Response »

Jnana – Knowledge and Beauty Tuesday, Mar 4 2008

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia12:23 pm

One of the more important Sanskrit words is *jnana. Jnana* means literally knowledge, and specifically the Supreme Knowledge: that which delivers from *avidya* (ignorance). Therefore pure *jnana* is nothing other than Realisation itself. Normally the term is used in such phrases as *jnana marga* (the Path of Knowledge) or *jnana yoga* (the yoga of knowledge — which is normally equivalent to the Path of Knowledge). These terms differentiate the way of Knowledge from the ways of Love (*bhakti marga*) and of (ritual) action (*karma marga*).

The root of the word is a fundamental Indo-European one, *kn* or *gn*, which gives us the English *knowledge* as well as the Greek *gnosis*. It also forms the basis of the Germanic word *kennen*, to know, and of course the English/Scots form, *ken*, and related words such as *cunning* and *canny*. Thence it is a short step from knowledge to ability. To say that one *can* do a thing is originally to say that one *knows* how to do it. So this fundamental word encompasses all knowledge and ability from the highest to the most everyday.

Interesting also is the fact that the root is connected with the idea of beauty. *Cunning* is used dialectically to mean "beautiful" as is *quaint,* another form of the word. Here we are conceptually rooted in the essential connexion between the Absolute, Realisation and primordial Beauty (Plato's *to kalon*).

What is most interesting, however, is that the same root also gives us some fundamental words related to femininity, such as *queen* and a now-obscene term for the female genitalia. The Sanskrit word for woman is the related *jani* and the Greek is *gunos* (which gives us our gynaecology, etc.)

From Jnana and Femininity

Leave a Response »

The Jewel in the Lotus Wednesday, Feb 27 2008

Devotion and Religion in Aristasia and Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia8:35 pm

Miss Miggles asked why Aristasians sometimes use Sanskrit mantras such as Om Mani Padme Hum (which may be translated as "The Jewel in the Lotus").

Lady Aquila answered:
Mantras are very special words, because Dea is immanent in Her names. In pronouncing them, we are – through Her grace – literally *in-voking* Her.

It must be borne in mind that our connexion with Aristasia Pura is an aethyric one. While conversations are "translated" into words, they are not actually verbal, which is why, for example, we cannot say whether Westrenne closely resembles English in a "literal" sense or only symbolically.

It must also be understood that, both in Telluria and Pura there are Sacred Languages and languages that are not sacred. Sanskrit, Chinese, Hebrew and Arabic are sacred languages. Latin, although it is an Ecclesiastical language is not a sacred language. And neither are any modern languages.

What this means is that a Sacred Language has a more direct connexion to "the first, the Mother-language" and its words are more closely related to the metaphysical actuality of the things they speak. In the original Angelic Tongue, each word would be the precise sound-analogue of an Archetype. In the Sacred Languages that have survived into the Age of Iron this, of course is very far from the case, but they have, especially in sacred contexts, a sufficient remnant of the Angelic Tongue to be effective for Divine Invocation.

In Aristasia Pura, Westrenne is not a Sacred Language and true Raihiralan Cairen is: so words of sacred efficacy will be retained from older languages.

There is further the case of certain very special special syllables, notably OM and HRIM (HREEM) which are directly analogous to the Primordial Word (OM in the pure, beyond-form aspect, HRIM as the Supernal Mother). These are transmitted from the earliest Tellurian times and are as near to the Primordial Universal Language as we can possibly come. It should be noted that even in the Far East

these Mantras are unchanged from their "Indo-European" forms: and we place "Indo-European" in inverted commas precisely because we have here to do with something that far transcends and predates any surviving (even if "dead") Tellurian language.

Leave a Response »

Language and the Pattern of History Friday, Jul 13 2007

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia11:37 pm

In all places and at all times it has been agreed that the direction of history is always "downward", from the Golden Age, or Garden of Eden to the Iron Age or Latter Days. The religions, philosophies and traditions of the world are unanimous in seeing not a pattern of progress, but of decline and degeneration.

If they are correct, then it follows from what we know about the matriarchal origins of civilisation that the highest and noblest and most spiritual forms of culture must have been those primordial feminine ones, while masculine-dominated civilisations must have come into being as quite a late phase of the process of decline.

This view of history, is, of course, completely alien to that of the late-patriarchal world-view with which we have all been inculcated from the earliest age, and which places late-patriarchy itself at the pinnacle of a long process of 'human progress', relegating earlier civilisations to varying degrees of 'ignorance' and 'barbarism'.

Nevertheless, when one looks at the facts pertaining to the very medium of our thought itself—language, it is hard to deny that superior intellectuality lies with the past rather than the present. Every language we know is a debased and simplified "scaling-down" of some earlier language. The modern Romance languages, for example (French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Roumanian) are greatly simplified dialects of Latin. Many of the grammatical complexities have slipped away with time, leaving the language less expressive, less flexible, less capable of dealing with subtle ideas, but very much *easier*. Latin and Greek are a maze of case-endings for modern speakers, but as we go back further in time, to even earlier languages in the same Indo-European family, such as Sanskrit, we find language which makes Latin and Greek seem positively childish by comparison.

And wherever a language or group of languages can be historically studied, we find the same thing. The ancient forms of language require more concentration, more presence of mind, more sheer *intelligence* on the part of speakers than do the later forms. Language is clearly being progressively simplified for a simpler people.

These changes, as we might expect, also alter the *character* of language. It becomes less and less an instrument for expressing subtle spiritual and metaphysical concepts and fine shades of meaning, but it becomes increasingly well adapted to handling physical phenomena and the material world.

Leave a Response »

Thamë and Sithamë Tuesday, Jun 26 2007

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia8:32 pm

Harmony, Comeliness, Seemliness: such are the watchwords of Aristasian "Law and Order" — a phrase from another land which would not be in the least out of place upon Aristasian lips, but would carry with it quite another colouring. All law, to the Aristasian, is akin to the laws of mathematics or of music — an expression of the underlying harmony of being; all order fundamentally the order of a dance, which is ultimately the great dance of the cosmos, presided over by Sai Thamë, the Angel of Harmony. To an Aristasian, grace in the sense of "gracefulness" is not a different concept from grace in the theological sense. They are intimately bound up one with another – and all of life is intimately bound up with them.

Sithamë (pronounced sit-ah-may) means the special thame of an individual. Thamë (with a small "t") is a complex word that means "law" and "harmony" and "own-nature". In a traditional society there is the thamë that is proper to everyone, there is the thamë that is proper to a particular estate (priestesses and intellectuals, nobles, artisans, servants), to a particular job or function (motherhood, musicianship, etc.) There is also the thamë that is special to an individual – her own personal nature, her "calling", her "way". This is called her sithamë or own-thamë.

See also:
Thamë, The Golden Order

Leave a Response »

Forms of Address Saturday, Jun 9 2007

Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia9:50 pm

Miss Dessie Octavia Vargas recalled:
One thing we discussed was the intimate form of address, "thou", now obsolete in English. Almost all of us have at least enough knowledge of some European language to know that there are different words for the second person according to whether one is intimate with them or formal: "Usted" and "tu" in Spanish, "Sie" and "du" in German, and so on.

By coincidence, on a mailing list I'm on, just yesterday a German pette was asked a question about the use of the German "du". One thing she said seems relevant: schoolchildren address their classmates as "du", but only since the Eclipse (not that she called it that) have college students begun doing the same.

It made me so sad to learn that. It makes me glad we've stopped using the intimate form in English, since if we still had it bongos would doubtless misuse it.

Lady Aquila commented:
People have often talked about a revival of the intimate-singular "thou" in Telluristasian usage. It is a very charming form, used properly. But Miss Vargas is quite right in saying that it is fortunate that Tellurians have lost it as they would undoubtedly be misusing it by now.

The widespread abuse of first-names in Telluria is the exact equivalent of the wrongful use of "tu" in France or "du" in Germany. In fact some more civilised English people (of whom there is a tiny handful left) refer to this outlandish first-naming of everyone as "*tutoiement*" which is the French term for "tu-ing" and "toi-ing" people inappropriately.

Among some Tellurians the avoidance of surnames is almost a taboo, so that when two Jims have to be distinguished, they will say "Jim from Woodford" or "Jim with the beard". It has an almost mediaeval ring to it. Perhaps eventually these cognomens will become hereditary and they will have surnames again!

One sometimes wonders what lies behind this horror of the surname. A false intimacy, certainly. A crude egalitarianism too. But is it not also a near-psychotic individualism that hates to associate a person with her roots in estate or even in family? Each person must be a floating atom belonging to no -one but herself (and the Octopus), with no roots and nothing but a personal name.

The new bonds which many of us form in Aristasia are for us a new rootedness and the beginnings of a sound, wholesome and home-like non-atomised society.

One Response »

The Angels Created Speech Sunday, Jun 3 2007

Devotion and Religion in Aristasia and Language and Culture: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia8:57 pm

This is a commentary on two verses from The Angelic Hymn to Dea from the Indian Devi Gita:

The angels created Speech which pervades all things, and whereby all creatures speak.

According to the modernist doctrine, speech "evolved" from animal squeaks and grunts. Yet a study of language teaches us that the earliest languages are the most complex and expressive, while the latest ones are the simplest. Language is continually simplified for the lesser minds of the Age of Iron (Kali Yuga). Even as this Age progresses, language is continually "scaled down". So modern Italian is a much simpler language than Latin.

Where, then, does language come from? Tradition teaches us that it proceeds from the single Word, in which all speech and all being is immanently contained. In the sacred language of Sanskrit, this single Word is represented in our earthly speech by the sacred monosyllable OM, or by the seed-mantra sacred to Dea, HRIM.

Most comely is this Speech: a Heavenly Cow yielding food and all desires. Through Her do we praise You. May She dwell ever among us.

From the single Divine Word grows the first language, the Language of the Angels. Thus we are told that the angels created speech. But speech (*Vac*), in the earliest Vedic literatures, is Herself known as a Form of Dea. She is the all-pervading cosmogonic (world-creating) Deity. Vac is associated with the cow, which represents the nourishing Mother, the Source of all good things*. Thus Speech, in Her highest aspect, is a manifestation of Dea Herself.

The Language of the Angels passed to maids upon earth, and in the earliest days our human speech was very pure, very close to the Angelic Language. But as the Age of Gold gave place to the Age of Silver, and the Age of Silver to the Age of Bronze, so human speech became less perfect, less an instrument for expressing pure Truth. At last there came a time when the Primordial Language was broken into different tongues — at first only a few, representing the major divisions of humanity, and then each of these languages split into various increasingly simplified sub-dialects, until we have the multiplicity of languages that we find today. This is the meaning of the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel.

Thus it is said that the angels created Speech, but also that Speech, in Her purest essence, is an aspect of Dea that transcends even the angels. Ultimately, it is only through Dea (in Her form as Speech) that we praise Dea.

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*Curiously, some scholarly Western commentators have expressed surprise at this maternal, cow-related aspect of Vac in addition to Her grander "cosmic" nature, but the name is clearly related to Latin *vacca*, a cow (French *vache*) as well as to *vox*, voice etc.

The cosmogonic nature of Speech — the association of Speech with the world-creating Power — is clear in the light of the metaphysical link between the naming of things and their creation. The names of things are not mere arbitrary "signs", ultimately evolved from animal noises, but contain, in the Primordial Language, the real Essences of those things. Thus in Sanskrit we have the distinction between *nama* and *rupa: nama* being the name of a thing — its Angelic or primordial Name, and hence its Archetype or real Essence — and *rupa,* or shape, being its outward or worldly manifestation. In a sacred language like Sanskrit, which still retains unbroken links to the Primordial Language, certain names or mantras contain the essence of that which they name. Hence, most obviously, the importance of the Primordial Words OM and HRIM, but also many other words and mantras.

The importance of words and of the Primordial Word (*Logos*) was understood by classical Greek philosophy and passed into Christian thought (note the opening of the Gospel according to St. John). However both Greek and Latin had already ceased to be true Sacred Languages, even though Latin functioned as an ecclesiastical language in the West.

In the Old Aristasian calendar, the name of the eighth month, Vois (pronounced *Voish*), means both speech and butter.

From The Angelic Hymn to Dea

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